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THE RELIGIONS OF THE PREHISTORIC EUROPEANS

The publication consists of two parts: the first, theoretical one, is entitled "**The Essential Archaeo-Religionistics**" (pp. 8–89) while the second, more specific, is called "**The Religions of the Prehistoric Europeans**" (pp. 93–560).

I. THE ESSENTIAL ARCHAEO-RELIGIONISTICS

1. SPIRITUAL LIFE IN PREHISTORY

The sphere of the contemporary **spiritual life** (1.1.) contains, apart from religion, a system of values, political and legal consciousness, consuetudinary norms, ethnic orientation connected with the knowledge of languages, communication abilities, and individual branches of science hierarchically arranged into five groups: technology, natural science, medicine, humanities and agriculture.

The traces of the **spiritual life of the prehistoric people** (1.2.) can be only followed through certain phenomena and objects of material culture, "sacralia". The sacralia belong in the sphere of the prehistoric "symbolical culture". **The symbolical culture** constitutes an opposite to the "**technological-utilitarian" culture.** In the prehistoric context, one must presume the existence of a rather narrow content of the expression "spiritual life": healing, time recording and the creation of calendars, empirical knowledge concerning various technologies, and consuetudinary moral, legal and administrative norms. It is difficult to imagine a more complex worldview manner of thinking with the first inhabitants of the earth; however, they inevitably responded to external stimuli from the very beginning, be it through "magic" and sorcery or by means of pleas and offerings to presumptive supernatural powers, i.e. religion. People only became aware of their ethnic affiliation with the break-up of the Nostratic (boreal, Indo-Uralic) ethnic (or language) unity (± 8000-6000 BC), and particularly in the process of the differentiation of post-boreal blocs, in European conditions especially the (pre)Indo-European bloc, in the course of the 2nd millennium BC.

Concrete forms of spiritual life in deep prehistory were contained within a universal religion/religiosity. Embryonic forms of spiritual life were cultivated and practised by magicians, sorcerers, shamans, sacerdotes, druids and heathen priests, simply by "priests" in the most general sense of the word, who gradually grew more and more professional. In different historical situations and chronological dimensions, "specialists" started to emerge among them, e.g. healers (medicine men), builders of monuments, "artists" of various kinds and so forth. As late as the 19th century, priests were left, apart from religion itself, with taking care of the morale, the registration of human relationships and everyday life of their flocks, as well as with the calendar aspect, celebrations of cyclic festivals etc.

Religion (religio), religiosity (religiositas), piousness (pietas), religious consciousness, spirituality, god-worship, or just faith, terms basically conveying the same meaning, are cornerstones of the human spiritual life. If this statement holds true about the present, it did even more so in the early phases of human history when religiosity virtually embraced the entire potential of mankind.

For this reason, **religion studies** (1.3.) deserve a great deal of attention. The discipline has a gnoseological (cognitive) aspect and an ethic aspect. Besides exploring concrete systems of faith, people should be inspired by moral norms formulated, advocated and promoted by religions (Komorovský 1999, 42, 90). With the majority of cases, the norms are positive and generally valid. Today, in the times of declining moral standards associated with consumerist and material societies in most developed countries, moral norms of ethically rich religious systems can become sources of "convalescence" and inspiration for the supporters of this convalescence, be they adherents of a religion or individuals without confession.

According to some, particularly religious, scholars, the human mind has always contained a "voice of conscience", a human "daimonion" coming from god. In these terms, the voice of conscience is an anthropological constant valid for mankind regardless of races, nationalities and religions. Through conscience, people are able to distinguish between what is morally good and wrong; it protects and guards the human morale. The morale is directly linked to the majority of world religious systems helping to sanction it. The voice of conscience in itself is a sanction of the human morality (Komorovský 1999, 67, 200).

The study of religion was the subject of a discipline previously termed "deity-science". This archaic term, however, does not cover the entire scope of the subject and is no longer used. At present, the study of religion is the subject and content of religionistics and theology.

Religionistics pursues religion in the broadest sense of the word. Its subject is *phenomena, processes and realities summarised by the general term 'religion'* (Horyna – Pavlincová 2001, 7). There exist several definitions of religionistics. For example, the Czech scholar J. Heller defines the branch concisely: *Religionistics observes and analyses expressions of the human piousness in all religious systems and cultural traditions.* (Heller – Mrázek 1988, 4) It is, in all truth, a "comparative religious science" operating from a distance; it objectifies its studies without preferring any concrete religion or denomination (Eliášová – Komorovský 1993).

Religionistics is actually an interdisciplinary branch as it draws on history, ethnology, archaeology, psychology, sociology etc. Its sources are both material and immaterial. **Archaeo-religionistics**, working chiefly with material culture sources, explores the origins and archaic forms of religion. Widely-pursued **ethno-religionistics** specialises in archaic and more advanced religious phenomena of various ethnic groups. Further disciplines in this field include folkloristics, anthropo-geography and others.

On the other hand, **theology** explores and defends a concrete religious system, a concrete denomination, as the most perfect and the only right religion. As a rule, it is associated with advanced world religions such as the monotheistic Judaism, Christianity and Islam, to name the best-known ones.

While religionistics is an empirical science, theology is a normative and deductive science. *While religionistics explores religious systems per se, leaning on the human experience, theology pursues the doctrine of faith, developing apologetics and dogmatics, referring to dogmas, holy books and revealed truths.* (Komorovský 1999, 8).

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 1.

2. FROM THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONISTICS AND ARCHAEO-RELIGIONISTICS

A brief history of the general **international religionistics** (2.1.) with the names of its founders and major exponents from various European countries is supplemented with references to basic resources available, in particular, to central European, Czech and Slovak readers: Heller – Mrázek 1988, 55-104; Michaels, ed. 1997; Horyna – Pavlincová 2001. In developed European countries as well as overseas, there currently exist a large number of religionistic institutes and specialists; in Germany itself there are around 25 institutes. (The list including literature, with overviews of contemporary religionistics, compare in: Kippenberg – Stuckrad 2003, 185–217.)

With regard to the anticipated main circle of readers, an individual passage is dedicated to **Czech and Slovak religionistics** (2.2.) and its chief protagonists (O. Pertold and his school, Z. Kalandra, J. Heller, J. Kubalík, J. Komorovský and others). The Czech Society for the Study of Religions is mentioned (Religionistika series, **RELIGIO** journal), as is the Slovak Society for the Study of Religions (academic conferences accompanied by publications, the **HIERON** journal etc.). In the Czech Republic and in Slovakia there currently work many religionists of different inclinations whose names are introduced further in the text, as well as in the selected bibliography of the publication. Owing to the overall subject of the book, subchapter **2.3.** is dedicated to excerpts **"From the History of the World Archaeo-religionistics"**, while the more extensive subchapter 2.4 features excerpts **"From the History of the Czech and Slovak Archaeo-religionistics"**.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 2.

3. THE ESSENTIAL ARCHAEO-RELIGIONISTICS

Archaeo-religionistics is considered a borderline, or interdisciplinary branch the subject of which is the study of religions/religiosity of people in prehistory and early history, on the basis of archaeological, ethnological, historical and other sources, and on the basis of general rules of religionistics, especially its ("creative" or "total") hermeneutics and phenomenology (Horyna – Pavlincová 2001, 139). Archaeo-religionistics helps elucidate the beginnings and early stages of human religiosity, which remains one of the key issues of religionistics in general.

The discipline's objectives are obvious; its methodology and procedures evolve, including testing possible applications of spiritual (or psychotronic, chart 1) and material (figs. 1-3) experiments (Momi 1999; Lüning 2005b). Archaeo-religionistics should not remain a descriptive, comparative and classifying branch but should also develop an interpretative aspect, not only as regards the practical–cultic side of religion; the discipline should penetrate the essence of archaic religia, i.e. their theoretical-dogmatic (faith) sphere.

Subchapter **3.1.** ("The **Theory of Religion/Religiosity**") first explores the fundamental issue: **what is a religion** (**3.1.1.**). Many scholars and a significant proportion of the lay public consider religion a basic human instinct, an anthropological constant, something inborn. Yet anthropological and archaeological evidence for these observations is disputable and remains subject to discussions.

The multitude of definitions of religion reflect the worldviews of their authors. Religion is frequently identified with a belief in deities (deity) associated with their (his/her) worship, yet this approach would only apply to more recent and content-advanced phenomena. However, the history of mankind tells us that a god in a religion is a considerably late phenomenon; moreover, a large number of advanced religious systems such as early Buddhism, Taoism and karman systems do not speak of deities at all.

It is thus necessary to understand religion in more general terms, as a primary expression of man's spiritual life, as a specific human phenomenon of ideological-reflective nature, as a *relation of man to something that exceeds him and on which he depends,* as a question after the "last truth", or a frame for the overall direction of man, as an *anthropological constant* or a *higher moral principle.* In this sense, religion (religio) is more like religiosity (religiositas). (Heller – Mrázek1988, 20; Sokol 2004, 27)

Given the mentioned broader approach, human religiosity appeared very early, in the period of the subsiding anthropogenesis when the first expressions of mental activities manifested themselves with the early forms of man. From its very beginnings, the Homo species has been attributed with abilities of at least embryonic forms of spiritual life (Fridrich 2005, 149).

The era of theism was preceded, in deep prehistory, by the period of non-theistic ideas, the period of nature religions. Their purpose was to win the favour of nature and its powers for human needs or, in case of magic, to enforce the favour. According to the classics of the Czech and Slovak archaeo-religionistics, theism was preceded by **animatism** (viewing things as living beings), **animism** (everything surrounding us has a soul), **manism** (cult of the ancestors whose spirits have power over their living progeny), **manaism** (belief in a mysterious impersonal power), dualism (belief in the opposite principles of good and evil ruling the world), **fetishism** (belief in the magic power of various objects – fetishes), **totemism** (belief in a relational tie between a human unit and a totemic animal or plant), **magism** (belief in supernatural powers in certain phenomena and things), **shamanism** (belief in supernatural abilities and power of shamans), **syncretic religions** (blending elements derived from various religious systems) etc.

In the next section, "**Religion and Magic**" (**3.1.2.**), the author places magic (in the prehistoric context more likely charming or sorcery) in contrast with religion: magic wants to rule and command the world and its powers, while religion worships supernatural powers; magic is thus regarded as "man's primary attempt at controlling the powers of nature". According to J. G. Frazer, magic precedes religious cults, and religion only appears where magic has failed; in this approach, magic resembles science rather than religion. The chapter also includes a typology of magic.

The section "**The Origin of Religion**" (**3.1.3.**) summarises theories concerning the onset of the human phenomenon; the theory of a "**revealed**" **religion** is supplemented with the "**degenerative**" or "**deterioration**" theory by W. Schmidt (1912–1955), **speculative** (pre-rational, pre-critical) **hypotheses, critical approaches** (mechanical-materialistic, Marxist, Freudian etc.), **historical-psychological** concepts (E. B. Tylor, J. Fraser, R. R. Marett and others), and **evolution hypotheses** (E. B. Tylor, W. R. Smith, R. H. Codrington and others); more recent theories include **responsive hypothesis** according to which people in all periods create religions themselves: *Man is consumed by the question of the sense posed by his very existence, as soon as he becomes aware of it,* as J. Heller puts it (Heller – Mrázek 1988, 20; more recently Štampach 1998, 69). In his opinion, religion stems from the *answer to the question of the last truth, the sense and value of our lives.*

The author formulates a **syncretic idea** of the origin of religiosity that embraces almost all of the mentioned aspects, apart from revealed religion.

Subchapter 3.2. ("The **Content of Religion**") analyses three basic components of every religion: the **theoretical-dogmatic component** (3.2.1.) – faith, ideology, dogma; theory of the sacred and the profane; myths and mythology ("tree of life" or "cosmic tree" and "tree of knowledge").

An individual section (3.2.2.) is dedicated to **deities and their worlds**, theogony, representations and attributes of gods, to animalism and to the classification of deities:

A. Deities of inanimate nature:
I Uranian, i.e. celestial deities (solar, lunar, astral)
II Deities of atmospheric powers (gods of thunder, lightning and storm)
III Telluristic deities, i.e. deities of earthly powers (earth – the Great Mother, mother of the earth, mountains, water and underground)
B. Deities of animate nature:
I Deities of vegetation
II Deities of hunting
III Deities of death
C. Deities of social powers and people:
I Deities of love and marriage
II Deities of war
III Deities of healing powers
IV Deities of crafts
V Deities of arts
VI Deities of trade

"The **Practical-Cultic** Component" passage (3.2.3.) chiefly deals with locations of cults (natural and artificially adjusted places: sacred trees, stones, swamps, springs, streams etc., landmarks, sacred groves, caves, rocks, individual cultic constructions, more complex sacrificial places, artificially built shrines and temples – "pagan temples"; also "private" sacrificial places often found in houses at hearths and fireplaces; cultic/sacred objects and sacrifices (including bloody sacrifices, animal and human).

In "The **Institutional-Organisation** Component" section (3.2.4.) individual forms of institutions are analysed (**3.2.4.1. – "sorcery"** and **shamanism; 3.2.4.2. – druidism and sacerdotalism**); attention is also devoted to persons (sorcerers, shamans, druids, heathen priests, priests) associated with religion and cult, including their attributes and tools.

Of the three mentioned components of religion, the first one, the theoretical-dogmatic component, is the least accessible in archaeo-religionistics. The situation improves with the institutional-organisation component, and is best with the practical-cultic component that could be, at least partially, traced by archaeological sources.

The three listed components of religion are supplemented with the "**Burial Rituals and Rites**" section (3.2.5.). Paradoxically enough, we often learn more about our ancestors' spiritual lives and **eschatology** (3.2.5.1.) from their graves than from their settlements. The section comprises a passage on **anomalous forms of the burial rite** (3.2.5.2.) and **cannibalism** (3.2.5.3.).

Individual parts are accompanied by lists of specialist literature.

4. THE CLASSIFICATION OF RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS

The chapter formulates a **theoretical-evolutionistic model of religion** (4.1.). Characteristics of individual evolution stages of prehistoric and early historic religions are preceded by information on the contemporary contradictory relationship between fashionable "**scientific creationism**" and its versions (especially "**intelligent design**" that acknowledges the evolution but masterminded by an "**Intelligent Designer**"). (Vácha 2005)

THE THEORETICAL EVOLUTION MODEL OF PREHISTORIC AND EARLY HISTORIC RELIGIONS OF CENTRAL EUROPE

PALAEOLITHIC	Lower	1 000,000 – 300,000	?
	Middle	300,000 – 40,000	first traces of self-awareness, first ritual burials
	Upper	40,000 – 10,000	dynamism, ancestor cults, beginnings of animism, animatism and demonism
	Late	10,000 – 8,000	
	Final	8,000 – 6,000	
NEOLITHIC		6,000 – 4,000	animism, animatism, demonism, proto-theism
ENEOLITHIC		4,000 – 2,000	origins of polytheism
BRONZE AGE		2,000 – 1,300	developing polytheism
URN FIELDS AGE		1,300 – 750	high polytheism
HALLSTATT AGE		750 – 400	origins of ethnic religions
LA TÈNE AGE		400 – 0	Celtic polytheistic Particularism
ROMAN AGE		0 – 400	German henotheism, first traces of Christianity, Christianisation of the Gemans
MOVEMENT OF THE NATIONS		400 – 568	
EARLY MIDDLE AGES		568 – 800	Slavic pagan supremotheism
		800 – 950	Christianisation of the central European Slavs

Chapter 4 includes a list of specialist literature on pre-monotheism and evolutionism. It is followed by the "**Jewish Monotheism**" section dedicated to the Jewish religion, **Judaism**, *the most distinct abstract monotheism in history, the first religion consistently worshipping one god.* (Terner 1991, 17)

5. BASIC TERMS IN ARCHAEO-RELIGIONISTICS

The dictionary of essential terms in archaeo-religionistics draws on the following:

Cancik, H., ed. 1998: *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*, Bd. IV: Kultbild-Rolle, Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln; McCoyl, E. 1999: *Keltské mýty a magie*, Praha 1999; Salajka, M. 2000: *Slovník náboženských a teologických výrazů a pojmů*, Praha; Skružný, L. 1996: *Atributy vybraných biblických postav, světců a blahoslavených*, Čelákovice; Šimandl, J. – Mádr, O. – Bartoň, J. – Hlavsová, J. 2004: *Jak zacházet s náboženskými výrazy. Pravopis, výslovnost, tvary, význam*, Praha.

II THE RELIGIONS OF THE PREHISTORIC EUROPEANS

1. THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF HUNTERS OF THE OLD AND MIDDLE STONE AGE (THE PALAEOLITHIC AND THE MESOLITHIC)

(Old layer of nature-religious conceptions)

The introduction (1.1.) gives an account of the **origination of the world, nature and mankind** according to the Christian Bible and in the light of the latest scientific research; **creationism** and **evolutionism** are inadvertently contrasted again. The author points out problems regarding the evidence of the creationist approach to the origin of man, using examples of a fossilised human finger from the Paluxy River site, Texas, allegedly c. 100 million years old, and a more recent find of a midget human form (Homo floresiensis) from Indonesia. Despite accumulating skeletal finds of human (pre)ancestors, the approximate evolution sequence of the Homo species remains such: Homo habilis/Homo ergaster, Homo erectus, Homo sapiens (in a number of subspecies, the best-known among them is Homo sapiens neanderthalensis) and Homo sapiens sapiens.

Subchapter 1.2. analyses the **old layer of nature-religious conceptions**. The first traces of people's spiritual lives (grooves – "records" on bones, red paint) already appeared in the Lower Palaeolithic. More marked traces come from the Middle Palaeolithic (including the first burials), while a truly avalanche-like supply of information regarding this area is associated with the Upper Palaeolithic (40,000–10,000 BP).

The **theoretical-dogmatic** component (1.2.1) is generally represented by dynamism (manaism), accompanied by respect for the dead (manism), fetishism, or totemism, and probably by the beginnings of animism and demonism. This component of religion is difficult to retrace.

The **practical-cultic** component (1.2.2.) is far more accessible as it is supported by multiple archaeological sources. These comprise, in particular, **Upper Palaeolithic cave paintings** (1.2.2.1.) – a list and brief characteristics of the most important caves of the western (Franco-Kantaberg) circle are given, followed by caves in the Far East; **Palaeolithic** female figurines – **"Venuses"** (1.2.2.2.), other **artistic-religious objects** (1.2.2.3.), and **human and animal sacrifice** (1.2.2.4.).

The most extensive section is dedicated to the interpretation of the Pleistocene art. The art of the Upper Palaeolithic cannot be interpreted from a religionist point of view alone as it did not exclusively concern "hunting magic" and "fertility magic", or other forms of "sorcery". For that matter, some scholars reject the religionist interpretation of the Pleistocene art completely. Although these surprisingly advanced expressions of the human psyche did play a crucial part in the ideology of dynamism (manaism), they must have also served different purposes (artistic renderings of nature reality, rudiments of mythology, religious-informative function, aesthetic, orientation, communicative and educational function, "black magic", "register" functions – records of catch, time etc.).

The **institutional-organisation** component (1.2.3.) is chiefly represented by the institution of "shamanism", i.e. images, burials, exceptionally also huts of "magicians", "sorcerers" or "charmers" (the term "shaman" denotes modern institutions of the kind). The section features selected representations of "magicians" in animal masks (Les Combarelles, Les-Trois-Frères, Teyat), their graves (Brno II, Dolní Věstonice; "Red Lady" from the Pavilland cave, Wales; burials in Sungir, near Moscow; the Malta station in Siberia; the Grotta dell Caviglione cave in Grimaldi, Italy; Arene Candide in Liguria and others), and a "magician's" hut from Dolní Věstonice (Klíma 1963, 122; 1983, 72).

The Pleistocene "magician"/"sorcerer" was not yet a professional in the true sense of the word; in any case, s/he was an individual endowed with both mental and physical prerequisites not just for performing religious rituals but also for a number of generally useful activities, through which s/he differed from the rest of the community. On the other hand, individual magic could be performed by anybody.

The next section (1.2.4.) presents an overview of the development of **burial rituals** in the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, from "proto-inhumation" to ritualised forms of genuine inhumation (Fridrich 2005, 150). Records of the oldest ground burials that started to appear in the Middle Palaeolithic are listed (Le Moustier, La Ferassie or La Chapelle au Sainte, France; the Es-Skhul and Et-Tabun caves on Mount Carmel, Front

Asia; the Kiik-Koba cave in Crimea, and Teshik-Tash in southern Uzbekistan). A burial of a disabled Neanderthal with flowers (grave no. IV in a burial cave in Shanidar, near Mossul, northern Iraq) is mentioned. Some of the further examples (Krapina, Monte Circeo and others) are possibly associated with manslaughter, quartering, ritual cannibalism etc., which regards human sacrifice rather than burial rituals.

The evidence of ritual burials escalates in the Upper Palaeolithic. Burials have been found in hunters' camps, caves, below overhanging rocks as well as in the free countryside, all over inhabited territories. In addition, gifts (especially jewellery) were more frequent with these burials.

Upper Palaeolithic burials, however, do not always manifest a general belief in life after death. Very often, they demonstrate respect for the important deceased, in some cases probably attempts to resurrect the dead by sprinkling them with red clay. Apart from individual burials, multiple graves (triple grave in Dolní Věstonice) and successive graves (Předmostí u Přerova) have been excavated. The first example of cremation also comes from Dolní Věstonice (child's burial no. 4). Examples of Upper Palaeolithic ritual burials are listed in the section. A generally obligatory burial rite did not yet exist in the period.

The first skeletal cemeteries started to emerge in the Mesolithic (± 10,000 – 6,000 BP), especially in northern periphery areas (Denmark, northern Germany, northern Russia, France) where the productive Neolithic economy was implemented with a considerable delay; however, certain more advanced features of social life have been traced even there. The origination of separate burial grounds bears witness to stronger ties between the Mesolithic people and certain territories, or to a kind of a magic demonstration of a community's claims over a given territory.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 1.

2. THE RELIGIONS OF THE PASTORALISTS OF THE UPPER STONE AGE (THE NEOLITHIC)

(More recent layer of nature-religious conceptions)

The subchapter **"A Changed World: The Arrival of Pastoralists and Farmers"** (2.1.) deals with economic, social and cultural changes generated by the advance of productive (pastoral-agrarian) economy.

The main section of subchapter 2 (2.2.) is dedicated to a **more recent layer of nature-religious conceptions.** In terms of spirituality, the Neolithic cannot be approached as a homogenous historical era; generally speaking, it is represented by animism, animatism, demonism and proto-theism, as well as by polytheism developing in progressive Front East centres. The central European Neolithic was chiefly moulded by the ascent of Late Neolithic proto-theism.

The **theoretical-dogmatic** component (2.2.1.) of advanced Neolithic religion stemmed from the need to procure agricultural land and secure the fertility of nature's vegetative powers, including animals and people. Pastoralists identified fertile soil – the earth – with a fertile woman – mother. Its opposite (male) element was the sky. The original, purely agrarian symbolism of the earth/woman – the sky/man constitutes a base of Indo-European proto-theism in which woman-mother undergoes a faster process of divinisation than the sky (Váňa 1990, 59; Mahlstedt 2004, 94 and others).

The domination of the woman in the Neolithic was not matriarchal. It was necessitated by the biological function of the mother, the filiation of children on the maternal line and the genuine and symbolic roles of women in agricultural economy. A woman-mother became a prototype of the imaginary Mother Earth, Magnae Matris: an abstract, not yet anthropomorphic, universal female deity. With the onset of written history, the female deity was given a name: Ninmach, Ninchursag, Inanna, Ishtar etc. in the Front East; Potnia (theron), Gaia, Gá, Dáméter, later Déméter in the Aegean civilisation; Isis in Egypt and so forth.

The **practical-cultic** component (2.2.2.) of Neolithic religions is illustrated by archaeological finds of original cultic places and ceramic models of sacrificial grounds, and by sacred objects. It could be termed "agrarian magic" intended to secure abundance and fertility.

The following section (2.2.2.1.) documents some major **Neolithic shrines** excavated in south-eastern and eastern Europe (clay "altar" at the Kapitan Dimitrijevo village in Bulgaria; two constructions at the

Serbian-Banat Partá; the "temple of Demeter" at Sabatinovka II, the Ukraine; sacred buildings iv Vésztö-Mágor, Hungary etc.). Furthermore, the appearance of Neolithic shrines is illustrated by a number of ceramic models (e.g. from Cascioarele, Truşeşti-Tuguieta, Vădastra in Romania and others). "Offering tables" are also frequent (Pianul de Jos, Transylvania; Szegvár-Tüzköves, Hódmezövásárhely-Kopáncs in Hungary etc.). One unique find is a sacred scene of small terracotta buildings found in Ovčarovo, Bulgaria.

A separate passage (2.2.2.2.) is dedicated to **European roundels** that exemplify principal sacred architecture of the advanced Neolithic in central and central-western Europe. Roundels were circular areas in a landscape enclosed by one or more ditches (Kreisgrabenanlagen) combined with internal wooden palisades and four (fewer, more) entrances directed at cardinal points (chart 18). The existence of roundels in Europe was only acknowledged in the 1970's, after a site at Těšetice-Kyjovice, South Moravia had been discovered (Podborský 1988). Until now, around 150 roundels of different construction types and sizes (chart 18) have been excavated in Europe, from the Carpathian Basin to the Rhine. Their origins are placed in the central Danubian Basin. Presumably, they were economic or social centres of (micro)regions and military fortresses, while also performing the information (calendar) function, the cultic function etc. (Makkay 1986;1990; Podborský 1988; Kovárník 1997; Podborský – Kovárník 2006). According to offerings (especially female figurines), animal and probably also human sacrifice, roundels are now viewed as socio-cultural areas with multiple functions, with the sacred function dominating. Obvious construction parallels between continental "woodhenges" and English megalithic circles such as Stonehenge or Avebury have spawned speculations on possible connections between both types.

Section **2.2.2.3.** sums up the data concerning **other cultic sites** of the Neolithic. The most significant "seasonal" ceremonies shifted from a limited framework of individual families to the level of a whole settlement unit, or a group of units. Nevertheless, "home" cults (home altars) survived; in addition, there probably existed various nature "sacred" sites, mainly in caves (Jungfernhöhle bei Tiefeneller, Germany), sacrificial pits etc.

Bloody (human and animal) sacrifice included **foundation (construction) sacrifice** (2.2.2.4.), sometimes combined with common material offerings (Postoloprty, Bohemia; Jelšovce, Slovakia; Veszprém, Hungary; Brześc Kujawski, Poland; Griedel and Dingolfing, Germany and others). Canine deposits in post pits of roundel palisades were also frequent. Finds of horned-cattle skulls regularly placed in roundel ditches or in sacred pits are regarded as highly important.

The extensive section on the **Neolithic sacred objects** (2.2.2.5.) centres upon human, chiefly female clay sculptures of individual south-eastern and central-European "idol-regions" and their versions (standing, enthroned, sitting with a child etc.). The author does not share the opinion of M. Gimbutas who considered the Balkan female figurines real goddesses – protectresses of life, prosperity, home, and peace; unlike Gimbutas, he views the oldest schematised idols (e.g. of the Moravian "Střelice" type, chart 21:5,6) as fertility fetishes, and figures with adoration arm gestures (e.g. of the "Mašůvky" type, chart 21:7,8) and the majority of sitting statues as representations of women priestesses. None of the examined figurines bears traces of any divine attributes. The section further concentrates on other ceramic cultic objects (charts 25-31).

In the history of the Neolithic research, a great deal of attention has been devoted to **symbolism**, both iconographic symbols and abstract artefacts; the issue is summarised in part **2.2.2.6.** Geometrical **ornamentation of the Neolithic pottery** is also believed to have been of major importance (Mahlstedt 2004; Danglová 2004).

In "The **Institutional-Organisation** Component" section (**2.2.3.**) the author concludes that women played a crucial part in the implementation of the practical-cultic element of the Neolithic religion, although collaboration from men – "magicians" – cannot be completely excluded. These people were not yet professional "priestesses" or "shamans" but ordinary members of families, possessing physical and mental dispositions for performing cultic ceremonies. Only exceptionally could a person devote himself or herself to a cult permanently (for example, a richly attired and equipped young woman from a grave in Vedrovice, Moravia – chart 32). A remarkable find of a "shaman family tomb" from Čičarovce, Slovakia (chart 34:6-8) shows the continuation of "magicians" of a shamanic type (Vizdal 1978).

In the "**Burial Rituals**" subchapter (2.3.) the author demonstrates that regular burials of the dead evolved into general phenomena in the Neolithic. From the Early Neolithic, there existed regular skeletal burial sites, from the Middle Neolithic also cremation sites, while the Late Neolithic was dominated by bi-rituality. Throughout the Neolithic there were "burials" at fortified settlements, multiple graves and large numbers of human skeletons or their parts in the ditches of enclosed settlements.

The text is accompanied by selected bibliography for chapter 2.

3. THE ARRIVAL OF THE HIGHER FORMS OF RELIGION IN THE LATE NEOLITHIC (ENEOLITHIC) AND THE EARLY BRONZE AGE

(Origins of polytheism)

The subchapter "**The End of the Large Civilisation Era and Misgivings on the Path Forward**" (3.1.) lists economic, social and cultural changes in Europe at the turn of the 4th and 3rd millennium BP that marked the end of the civilisation of the oldest pastoralists. The discovery of metallurgy generated a large number of changes: the development of "pre-crafts" triggered a distinct labour division, social inequality and the transformation of matrilineal systems into patriarchal, as well as mass movements of human communities.

The section "**New Ethnic and Social Structures Divided the Religiosity of the Old Europeans**" (3.1.1.) states that in the watershed Eneolithic period Europe split into several civilisation circles, the inhabitants of which were involved with different kinds of material and spiritual life. In general terms, the Eneolithic is regarded as an era of crystallising polytheism, i.e. the origins of "genuine", particularly male deities, new types of shrines and definite conceptions of the "nether world". Late Neolithic proto-theism evolved into the initial stage of polytheism that went on to develop in the Bronze Age. In the Eneolithic, the principal **triad of Indo-European deities** took shape in the European civilisation: **the sky, the earth and the underworld**, symbolised by the human head, trunk and crotch. The celestial (Uranian) deity was represented by the solar disc, its partner being the moon; the earth deity was symbolised by Magna Mater, while there existed no concrete conceptions of an underground (chthonic) deity. It cannot be verified whether individual deities were personified at this point; perhaps with the exception of the Great Goddess.

The section "**The Traditions of the Great Goddess in the Mediterranean**" (3.1.1.1.) deals with the survival of the Great Mother ("Mighty Lady") cult in the Mediterranean, from the Cyclades, Crete and Greece through Malta, Sardinia and Corsica to the Balearic Islands. All these areas were associated with the cult of a great female "**megalithic**" **divinity** (Gimbutas 1996, 172; Eliade – Culianu 1993, 200; Krzak 1994, 360), stretching to the Bronze Age in some locations. The cult found expression through figurines and sculptures of women – Sibyls, goddesses and mothers of gods (fig. 36; chart 38). The passage comprises an overview of Mediterranean megalithic constructions: temples of a trefoil-shaped ground plan in Malta (including a subterranean "hypogeum" in Hal Saflieni), nurags and "sacred wells" (Santa Vittoria de Serri) in Sardinia, torrs in Corsica, and talayots, tauls and navets in the Balearic Islands (charts 36,37,39).

The part "**North-Western European Megalithism**" (3.1.1.2.) is dedicated to megalithic constructions of western, north-western and northern Europe, including menhirs, menhir sculptures, menhir alleys (and British alignments), cromlechs and henges, e.g. Stonehenge (charts 44, 45), Avebury (chart 43), Durrington Walls (chart 41:6), Marden, Mount Pleasant, Woodhenge (41:3) and others. Burial megaliths (dolmens etc.) are also discussed. North-western European megaliths were erected in honour of a great maternal "dolmen deity" (chart 40:7, 9a).

The subchapter "**The Beginnings of Polytheism in Central Europe**" (3.2.) sums up Late Palaeolithic religions of Central Europe.

The section "**The Theoretical-Dogmatic Component**" (3.2.1.) lists the differences between the religiosity of the agrarian culture of the Old Europeans and the spiritual life of the immigrants, especially the Indo-Europeans with the corded ceramic culture and the non-Indo-Europeans with bell beakers. The religious life of the Old Europeans was marked by the reverberations of the Neolithic proto-theism documented by archaeological sources, and its gradual transformation into early polytheism. As far as the "immigrants" are concerned, archaeological sources regarding their spiritual life are scarce; nevertheless, abstract forms of early, or maybe even advanced, polytheism can be presumed.

The **practical-cultic** component (3.2.2.) of the native Old Europeans' religion is amply documented by archaeological sources (as it was in the Neolithic).

The **"Eneolithic Shrines"** (3.2.2.1.) section enumerates several central European menhirs (Klobuky, Chabry, the disputable "Kounov stone lines") alongside individual types of possible natural sacred constructions (sacrificial pits, buildings with animal remains, special kinds of human and animal burials etc.), and more sophisticated artificial "private" and "public" sacrificial grounds.

A separate passage is dedicated to **roundels** and **roundeloids**, as well as to **tetragonal cultic areas** (3.2.2.2.). The concept of the roundel construction subsided after the "great expansion" era; however, it did not disappear completely. Roundels saw a revival in the Eneolithic, in the shape of more loosely-designed roundeloids with "lighter" ditches. Tetragonal sacred areas anticipated a new line of socio-cultural buildings that were to develop further, peaking in "tetragonal bulwarks" of the La Tene Age (chart 46).

An extensive section on **sacred objects** (3.2.2.3.) opens with characteristics of female idols and their schematised specimens, clay animal figures including the symbol of a yoke, models of four-wheel carts, gynaecomorphic vessels, face urns, zoomorphic vessels, pseudo-kernoses, and drums, and goes on to list other unusual ceramic vessels and objects featuring mysterious signs, narrative or symbolic scenes (charts 47-49). One important phenomenon that was to accompany mankind from the Eneolithic until the Late Bronze Age were ritual **ceramic deposits** buried as votive offerings (according to some scholars as offerings to a water deity).

The **institutional-organisation** component (3.2.3.) of Eneolithic religious systems has so far been scarcely documented by archaeological sources. Scholars presume a gradual decline of female activities and a more substantial proportion of a male element (a find of a "priest's" grave in Laschendorf, the Mecklenburg region, Germany – chart 50:1a-g). In megalithic areas there probably existed a caste of "priests" ("chaplains"), learned individuals with technical skills who designed and organised the construction of stone monuments and subsequently held there ceremonies associated with the worship of a "megalithic deity".

The subchapter on the **constituting burial rite** (3.3.) strives to encompass the variety of burial rites in individual cultural areas of the complex prehistoric era. Archaeological finds mark gradual generalisation of the ritualised burial, faith in a materialised and abstractly approached afterlife, and also social differences, reflected in the monumentality of graves and tombs and the burial equipment. The tumultuous times generated local modifications of burial rituals including cremation and inhumation. A fixed skeletal burial rite, documenting an ingrained faith in the afterlife, was only brought to central Europe by Late Eneolithic invaders.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 3.

4. THE ADVANCE OF RELIGIOSITY IN THE PREHISTORIC EUROPE

(Peaking polytheism in the urn fields period)

The introductory subchapter **"The Arrival of the Bronze Age Civilisation (Old Metallic)"** (4. 1.) characterises the economic, social and cultural context of the Bronze Age (± 2000–800 BC) in its dynamic development. A great deal of attention is devoted to the ethnogenesis of Indo-European nations in the Bronze Age.

The section **"Cognitional Sources of the Bronze Age Spiritual Life"** (4.1.1.) presents an overview of sources (analogies of Aegean myths, archaeological finds) concerning spiritual life of the Bronze Age people.

The subchapter **"The Religiosity of the Bronze Age People"** (4.2.) deals with traditional cornerstones of polytheistic religion of the Bronze Age, particularly its high phase in the urn fields era (± 1300–800 BC).

Section 4.2.1. reconstructs, within the **theoretical-dogmatic** component, a possible **pantheon of main deities** (4.2.1.1.) that probably already had anthropomorphic features. First and foremost, there was a sun deity of an Apollonian type the existence of which is documented by a host of archaeological artefacts ("sun chariots", "sun boats", "sun hats", images – symbols; figs. 54, 55, 57–60; charts 56–59), alongside deities of water, fire, crafts (especially metallurgy), deities of the netherworld or the underworld (of a chthonic type), a war deity (the Bronze Age was a period of an increasing number of military conflicts and dragging war expeditions), and maybe some other divinities (connected with weather and earthly phenomena).

The **practical-cultic** component (4.2.2.) was extensive and is well-documented. The section presents an outline of prospective **Bronze Age shrines** (4.2.2.1.) in central Europe ("sacred mountains", sacred areas within fortified settlements, sacrificial pits, "altar sacrificial grounds" – chart 64, other unique cultic constructions – figs. 65–67, residential-type houses in settlements, stone anthropomorphic steles) on the basis of Minoan and Mycenaean analogies. The construction of central European **roundels and roundeloids** continued (4.2.2.2.). A major part in the cultic sphere was played by Italian-Swiss and Scandinavian incisions in rock– **petroglyphs** (4.2.2.3.) which, together with paintings on stone walls of large tombs (Kivik, southern Sweden – chart 68) provide us with a concept of chief Old Germanic gods. **Further cultic places** are listed (4.2.2.4.): natural sacrificial grounds such as rivers, wells, springs, swamps, peat bogs, caves and rocky crevasses (the Kyffhäuser limestone mountain range, Thuringia; Chvalovská cave and Majda-Hraškova cave, Slovakia; Agteléc cave, Hungary, and others), "sun stones" etc. Section **2.2.5.** discusses **human sacrifices**, the finds of which multiply in the Bronze Age, peaking between ± 1300–1000 BC ("Skalka", near Velim, Bohemia; "Cezavy", near Blučina, Moravia; settlements of the Knovíz culture, central Bohemia etc.); the list includes a number of anomaly human burials (foundation sacrifices; burials at settlements, outside standard cemeteries; burials in storage vessels – "pithoi" etc.). The "**Deposits**" section (**4.2.2.6.**) summarizes the issue of depots of bronze objects and stores of ceramic vessels; reasons for burying deposits in the ground are now frequently associated with cultic purposes, although there probably were profane reasons as well.

Sacred movables (4.2.2.7.) connected with the Bronze Age are extraordinarily rich and varied, which corresponds with a boom of religiosity and ceremonialism of the time, particularly from proto-urban cultures of the 16th century BC. The period embraces an ample assortment of ceramic "cultic objects" (chart 72; figs. 77,78), supplemented with metal artefacts in the urn fields era (chart 73). The first anthropomorphic **woodcuts of gods** appeared (Ralaghan, Ireland; Bad Buchau, Württemberg region, Germany; Lagore crannog, Italy, fig. 61). Unique finds comprise a **grain battercake** from Nižná Myšla, Slovakia (Olexa 2003, 86), a ceramic human mask from Ostrov, near Prague (fig. 80:1), or a human hair "plait" from Holtumer Moor, Germany, giving evidence of a "hair cult" (Hrala 2000, 292).

"**The Institutional-Organisation** Component" section (4.2.3.) features observations on chiefs of Bronze Age families and tribes, "priest kings" wielding superior political and religious power. Their subordinates were members of the "**priestly" caste** (4.2.3.1.), co-founders and executors of religious doctrines, cultivators of mythology and performers of public religious ceremonies, and perhaps even "lower" priests, "attendants" in performing bloody sacrifices, in charge of any "dirty" work. Women "priestesses" were also important, especially in relation to female deities. Moreover, Bronze Age "priests" concentrated the entire knowledge of various branches of the spiritual life, from astronomy and calendar through medicine to rudiments of exact science. Beyond doubt, the "grey zone" comprised sorcerers, charmers, "wisewomen" and witches, particularly useful in the "rural" environment. Archaeological proofs concerning burials of Bronze Age "priests" appear highly problematical.

There exist several theoretical versions of **Bronze Age rituals** (4.2.3.2.), based on distinctive sacred artefacts (figs. 83, 84; chart 59:7) and analogies from the Aegean area.

The subchapter "**The Burial Rite Testimony**" (4.3.) recapitulates the development of burial customs in the course of the Bronze Age. Attention is given to the plundering of graves of the Old and Middle Bronze Age, fuelled by hunger for precious objects as well as by religious motives (the search for "relics" etc.). The gradual replacement of skeletal burials with cremation testifies to a changing religious direction aimed at faith in an abstract form of the afterlife. In the urn fields period, cremation became a general phenomenon; the remainders of the Neolithic cult of fertility and the earth were finally replaced by the cult of the sun. The change also involved conceptions of the soul's immortality; the soul had to be purified by fire and separated from the body, or from the realm of the living (Cabalska 1972; Veliačik 1979); this also touches upon the issue of "soul holes" on urns which now appear rather disputable (Tackenberg 1976; Hrala 2000a). The text includes a passage on different kinds of graves and tombs, especially **monumental tombs (burial mounds) of the kin and tribal "aristocracy"**, i.e. "magnates" ("princes"), with additional burials of their slain wives and servants.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 4.

5. POLYTHEISM OF THE OLD IRON AGE (HALLSTATT AGE)

(Origins of ethnic religions)

The first subchapter "**The Arrival of the Late Metallic Age Civilisation. The End of Prehistory in Central Europe**" (5.1.) characterises the Hallstatt civilisation. It originated in central Europe, north of the Alps after ± 800 BC, on the periphery and under the influence of the ancient world, but was rooted in and evolved from domestic foundations. The Hallstatt civilisation represents the "end of prehistory" in central Europe and the onset of "chieftainship" ("military democracy"). The "princely" caste of the Hallstatt era adopted the lifestyle of the Greek aristocracy and, consequently, also elements of an advanced polytheistic religion. In the Hallstatt Age, ethnogenetic processes towards the crystallisation of the non-Indo-Europeans (Iberians, mysterious Ligurians) and, in particular, the main Indo-European ethnic groups (Celts, Illyrians, Venets, Thracians, pre-Germans and Balto-Slavs) were peaking in Europe. The subchapter is supplemented with a section on the **sources of the Hallstatt era spiritual life** (5.1.1.), virtually identical with those of the Bronze Age.

The subchapter on the **religiosity of the Hallstatt Age people** (5.2.) is the most important part of chapter 5; it is divided into sections dedicated to individual components of spiritual life. The subchapter comprises examples from Greece of the Homer period (12th – 8th century BC), the archaic period (8th – 6th century BC) and the classical period (5th – 4th century BC) of ancient history.

Observations on the **theoretical-dogmatic** component of the Hallstatt Age religion (5.2.1.), which was generally polytheistic, with some ethnic groups perhaps already henotheistic, create an image of slightly differentiated ethnic religions. They were characterised by faith in the absolute power of gods, the following of their commandments, observance of civil virtues and customary moral norms, combined with strong social differences and heroisation, even divinisation, of sovereigns. With more or less probability, the author attempts to reconstruct **anthropomorphic pantheons** of the largest ethnic groups (5.2.1.1.). With the early Celts, partially also Germans, scholars can work with a historical retrospect; the existence of supreme deities of the other nations can be at least hypothetically deduced on the basis of archaeological sources (especially ceramography). For the Illyrian, or Veneto-Illyrian world, an earthly **female deity** (associated with the crops or fertility) is typical, mediating, through the "tree of life", a connection with a celestial male deity (sun?) (chart 82:5,5a), possibly also **further female deities** (of marriage, birth, death etc.). A concept of three female divinities, perhaps Fate goddesses, "spinners of fate" (equivalent to ancient Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos) appears highly probable. In addition, one can presume faith in other Uranian deities (of the moon, stars, wind, fire), gods of crafts, arts, healing, knowledge, as well as gods of war, water and the underworld. The main ethnic groups already conceived their superior protective gods or goddesses (e.g. the figure of "Goddess Noreia" on a cultic chariot from Strettweg, fig. 91).

"The **Practical-Cultic** Component" part (5.2.2.) lists the best-known **shrines of the Hallstatt Age** (5.2.2.1), from traditional natural cult sites to artificial shrines (built, for example, in settlements). Separate passages are dedicated to the mythical "sacred tree" on Burkovák Hill near Nemějice, southern Bohemia (chart 84:B), surviving "light versions" of roundels and roundeloids (a unique example of a sacred area in the settlement of the Horákov culture in Kuřim, Moravia, fig. 92), Late-Hallstatt "granges" anticipating tetragonal Celtic shrines (the best-researched construction is located near Droužkovice, Bohemia, fig. 93) etc. Special attention is devoted to the famous Hallstatt find from the vestibule of the **Býčí skála – Bull Rock Cave** (5.2.2.2.) in Moravia (figs. 94–101) and its interpretation (the author considers the cave an "underworld sacrificial site", contrary to the original interpretation of a "royal burial" involving bloody ceremonies). Further cave sacrificial sites are listed as analogies, such as "sacrificial shafts" Durezza am Tscheltschnigkogel near Villach, Carinthia, Germany; Knochenhöhle, Istria; Grotta della Ossa, Italy etc. (Urban 2000, 248n)

Section 5.2.2.3. analyses **human, animal and other sacrifices.**

Sacred movables (5.2.2.4.) were, like in the urn fields era, considerably varied, though not so multiple (chart 86). Some pottery products of the Hallstatt period are true works of art and can be hardly ascribed any practical importance (charts 82, 83, 87). Ceramic vessels still feature "graffiti", engraved figurative motifs or whole narrative scenes in the spirit of a geometrical visual style (chart 83). The majority of **Hallstatt toreutics** were manufactured in the name of sun symbolism, be they ceremonial vessels or utility specimens (chart 88).

The **institutional-organisation** component (5.2.3.) of the first ethnic religions is difficult to access. Like in the urn fields era, the supreme spiritual power was probably wielded by the members of the "princely" caste, "priest kings". Their genuine social functions ("community elders", "sacred king", "high priest" etc.) are still discussed (Krauße 1999; Veit 2000 and others). The members of this aristocracy certainly did not perform common religious ceremonies; they adopted habits of Mediterranean rulers including an idle lifestyle abounding in worldly pleasures. Feasts of the nobility were ritualised, and agreements made in their course had a character of contracts concluded under divine surveillance (Bouzek 1997b, 324). The exact system, structure and numbers regarding the executives of the Hallstatt "clergy" appear difficult to decipher.

Burial rites (5.3.) testify to complex eschatological conceptions of individual ethnic groups and relevant burial rituals. The western, proto-Celtic world was dominated by bi-rituality, with cremation intended for the lower classes. In contrast, cremation prevailed in the eastern Hallstatt world, even in cases of "princely" burials. The bi-rituality of the Hallstatt era burials bears witness to a non-unified religious and philosophical approach to the afterlife, as if a materialistic attitude clashed with an abstract, or mystical, one. The relative cultural unity of the Hallstatt civilisation thus poses a contrast to its spiritual non-unity. The section also specifies examples of the best-known "princely" burials of the Hallstatt Age.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 5.

6. OLD CELTIC RELIGIONS

The introductory subchapter (**6.1.**) discusses the origins **and the oldest history of the Celts**, concentrating on the La Tène Age (± 500/400 BC – ± 0), the beginnings of Romanisation (Gallo-Roman period; ± 0–400) and the island (Christian-Celtic; ± 200–900) period.

The **religion of Old Celts** is conveyed in extensive subchapter **6.2.** Section **6.2.1. summarises** written (ancient authors, late Celtic legends) and archaeological **resources.**

Section **6.2.2.** analyses the **theoretical-dogmatic component** of the Celtic religion. In its advanced form, it was a religion with elaborate polytheistic dogma, influenced by Greek philosophy and religion, **Orphism** and the **Pythagorean School.** Celtic religion was based on faith in the immortality of soul, the movement of souls (metempsychosis), life after death, omnipotent immortal gods and strict morale accentuating virtue, honesty and bravery.

Section **6.2.2.1.** presents an overview of the majority of gods known from the **Celtic pantheon.** The Celts worshipped a large number (around 400) of local (tribal) deities ("Celtic particularism") that evolved into an all-Celtic pantheon headed by the triad of the most powerful deities associated with human sacrifices: **Taranis** the god of thunder and the sky required human sacrifice by burning; **Teutates** the god of war was appeased by drowning human sacrifice; **Esus** the god of trees and wind, wealth and war demanded sacrifices to be hanged in trees. The triad was accompanied by further significant gods (**Cernunnos, Mokos** – the god with boar ?, **Ogmios, Belenos, Lugh, Sucellus** and others) and goddesses (**Epona, Séquana, Sirona** etc.); divine couples were also worshipped, as well as the **"Matrons"**, three mother goddesses. In the late island phase, about 50 other local deities were worshipped in the British Isles. According to the Old Celts, divine "ways of life" were similar to those of the mortals but gods dwelt in sacred places such as caves, islands, moors etc.

Celtic gods were often **accompanied by animals** (section 6.2.2.2.). The most important sacred animal was boar, followed by stag, bull, horse, goat or ram, snake, dog and copious birds, especially (talking) rook, crane, cockerel etc.

"The **Practical-Cultic** Component" section (**6.2.3.**) centres upon Celtic shrines. The Celts did not erect any stone temples but worshipped their gods in nature, in forest sanctuaries, "sacred zones" with marked genius loci, in caves, mountains, on hilltops, by rocky formations, in moors, swamps, desolate and uninhabited places, by springs and streams etc. They predominantly worshipped sacred trees, especially oak and yew. If mistletoe grew on these trees, it was a proof that the tree was holy.

The **oldest artificial shrines** come from the proto-Celtic period (6.2.3.1.), for example, the **Goloring** roundel in Germany, sacred areas of the **temenos** type in fortified settlements (Hradiště nad Závistí, near Prague), sacred groves – **nemetons** etc. In the British Isles, druids employed old megaliths for sacred purposes.

The most typical Celtic shrines of the La Tène Age were tetragonal mounds ("**Viereckschanzen**") described in section **6.2.3.2.** However, not all of these constructions necessarily had a primary sacred function. There exist further interpretations; for example, they might have served residential purposes. The constructions were built to a standard design: a square area of 100x100 m or 50x50 m was first enclosed by wooden palisades, later by a combination of ditches and mounds, with a single entrance. The inner areas bear traces of unspecified wooden constructions or sacrificial pits; in one of the shrine corners there was a regular and deep "sacrificial shaft". „Viereckschanzen" were particularly widespread in the western Celtic world, from France through Germany (with the majority between the Main and the Alps) to Austria, Bohemia and occasionally also Moravia. Numerous examples are listed (figs. 131–133; chart 99). Under the influence of Roman constructions, small wooden or stone temples were erected on the tetragonal mound areas in the Gallo-Roman period (chart 101).

Section **6.2.3.3.** gives examples of **other** (atypical) **shrines** such as stone halls in Celtic-Ligurian fortified settlements of Entremont and Roquepertuse, southern France, with stone porticos featuring human heads (chart 106), various "home" shrines on territories occupied by the Celts (charts 103, 104) etc.

Section **6.2.3.4.** informs readers about **cultic attributes** of the La Tène Age. These predominantly included carvings, sculptures and bronze statues of gods, heroes and druids. The fact that the Celts did not provide their gods with human appearance (Celtic deities could assume any appearance) suggests a logical conclusion that the mentioned objects do not represent gods but heroised humans, most frequently druids with a "La Tène tonsure", members of other social elites or significant dead ancestors (Venclová 2002, 155n). In some cases, however (compare e.g. chart 91:1,3,4), a "divine" interpretation of sculptures cannot be excluded.

Section **6.2.4.** concerns the **institutional-organisation** component of the Celtic religion. The passage **"Druids and Druidism" (6.2.4.1.)** is dedicated to Celtic priests, from the origin of the word "druid" to their non-religious functions. Druids did not just coin religious doctrines and perform religious ceremonies; they were also judges and arbiters in matters "civil and penal", guardians of morals and traditions as well as keepers of various "secrets", i.e. empirical knowledge from different fields of science (astronomy, natural science, medicine etc.); they also knew the Greek alphabet (although they did not really use it) and kept their learning strictly secret. In addition, there were "lower" priests – euhags, seers (vates) and minstrels (bards).

Although **druidism** was an all-Celtic institution, its centre is usually placed on the Isle of Anglesey, near the north coast of Wales. Priests from the whole Celtic world would go to Britain to study religion, and from there druidism soon spread to Gaul and the European mainland. Druids are believed to have held annual all-Celtic gatherings in which delegates from various tribes participated, electing the High Druid. On their tribes' territories, druids firmly ruled the religious, public and private lives of the Gallic population. To protect their religious learning, their employed a kind of an "interdict". As bearers of ethnic sovereignty, druids defied Romanisation, initiated uprisings against the Romans and fought for the preservation of the Celtic identity.

Graves of druids can only be identified exceptionally (speculations on the "**Lindow Man**", or the grave of a warrior "surgeon" from **Pottenbrunn**, Lower Austria, chart 107).

Celtic **religious ceremonies** (6.2.4.2.) can only be described in fragments. Druids' emblems comprised a sacred neck piece, "torque" or "torc" (figs. 136, 140) and a gold sickle that they used for cutting mistletoe on holy trees (fig. 141). They wore face masks during the ceremonies and used "magic wands" at divination. An extreme feature of Celtic ceremonies was bloody sacrifice (also animal and human sacrifices in house foundations). One surprising revelation is a bloody "head cult" documented both archaeologically (chart 106) and in literature. A sacred vessel of the Celts was a metal cauldron (the best-known specimen comes from the peat bog at Gundestrup, Denmark, chart 92). The Celts filled cauldrons with offerings and stored them in sacred places.

The druids were in charge of the **Celtic calendar** (6.2.4.3.). The Celtic year was first lunar; the Celts recorded time after nights and on the basis of moon phases. Later they also incorporated the solar calendar. The Celtic year consisted of a warm and a cold period defined by Beltane (1 May) and Samhain (1 November). Apart from the two, the Celts also celebrated Imbolc (early February) and Lughnasadh (1 or 2 August), and subsequently also other festivals (Toulson 1998).

The "**Burial Rite**" subchapter (**6.3.**) states that the Celts believed in the immortality of the human soul: death for them was merely the "middle of a long life". They believed that after death the soul acquired a new, more beautiful body and lived in the realm of the dead, the place of joy and merrymaking. The general burial rite was skeletal (a large number of "flat" Celtic cemeteries have been excavated), especially in central and south-eastern Europe, on the territories the Celts once occupied. Cremations have also been revealed.

The chapter closes with Appendix: "**The Cultic Situation of the Púchov Culture People**".

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 6.

7. MAJOR ETHNIC RELIGIONS OF OLD EUROPE

The chapter discusses the oldest and most typical ethnic religions of the early historical Europe, the religions of the Thracians, the Etruscans and the Scyths.

7.1. THE RELIGION OF THE OLD THRACIANS

A brief history of the Thracian ethnic group is followed in part 7.1.1. by an outline of the **theoretical-dogmatic** component of its religion. It was rooted in respect for gods and closely tied with Greek religiosity. The religion had bleak traits and abounded in metaphysics. The body was considered a "grave" of the soul, the earthly life a tribulation; The Thracians wept for the newborn as they had to undertake the earthly journey, and rejoiced over approaching death as they believed in the eternal life of the human soul.

The Thracians worshipped three major deities: **Areus** (the god of war), **Zagreus** (the god of wine and merrymaking – equivalent to the Greek Dionysus) and **Bendis** (the goddess of hunting, maternity and the moon – equivalent to the Greek Artemis); however, their pantheon was a great deal richer (Sitalkes the sun god, the divinised Zalmoxis, the mysterious "Cabeiri": Axieros, Axiokersos, Axiokersa and Kadmilos, and others). In addition, the Thracians also worshipped some of the Greek gods.

"The **Practical-Cultic** Component" section (7.1.2.) informs readers, in particular, about the eastern (XI) terrace of the **Grădiştea Muncelului** fortress (the capital of Decebal's empire; chart 115) which featured stone temples including circular "Dacian calendars", and about the "**shrine of the Great Gods**" on the island of Samothráké (fig. 144) and the local hierophants. The section further describes ("temple") treasures of metal, and often gold, vessels such as zoomorphic drinking horns – rhyta (Vălčitran, Panagjurište, Rogozen etc.) with images of Thracian or Greek deities (charts 110–114).

"The **Institutional-Organisation** Component" section (7.1.3.) summarises scarce information concerning Old Thracian priests. Priests were both men and women who had to go through a comprehensive training. Their learning and "laws" were only preserved in the shape of songs, akin to Celtic druids.

The **burial rite** (7.1.4.) of the Thracian tribe was varied (bi-rituality) and changeable, as regards the external layout of the graves.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for subchapter 7.1.

7. 2. THE RELIGION OF THE OLD ETRUSCANS

A brief introduction into the history of the enigmatic Etruscan tribe continues with an observation on the **theoretical-dogmatic** component (7.2.1.) of its religion. Multiple literary sources (extensive religious texts: **Disciplina etrusca** (Libri haruspicini, Libri fulgurales, Libri rituales), a linen wrapping found with an Egyptian mummy called **"liber linteus"**, with descriptions of religious ceremonies according to seasons of the year, actually a "liturgical calendar") and archaeological sources (temples, a **bronze model of a sheep's liver** from Piacenza with the names of 22 Etruscan gods – chart 116:2; sacred artefacts) are available.

The Etruscans worshipped a large number of gods; they had human appearance and lived in heaven. Although there existed a common divine **pantheon**, every town had its own gods, heroes and demons. The majority of the most significant gods were "Etruscanised" Greek deities, some purely Greek deities and autochthonous Etruscan deities. The all-Etruscan pantheon was headed by three gods: **Tinia (Tin)** the god of thunder, **Uni** the goddess of marriage and birth, related to the Roman Juno, and **Mernva**, related to Athena/Minerva, predecessors of the Roman deities Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. Other major deities included the goddess **Turan** ruling all living beings, the war god **Laran**, the water god **Nethuns**, **Sethlans** the protector of craftsmen and artists, **Eita (Aita)** the ruler of the underworld and his wife **Persiphai (Phersipnai)**; the couple also commanded many underworld demons, especially **Charun** and **Tuchulcha**. Original Etruscan gods included **Voltumna**, **Nortia**, **Vanth**, **Velta (Velthune)**, **Maris**, **Selvans**, **Thesan** and others. Moreover, Etruscans also recognised Penats, female Lasas and male Mans (guardians and guides of people), nymphs and the like.

A specific Etruscan figure was the divine child **Tages**, believed to have been born, through gods' will, by Mother Earth in order to teach mankind the art of fortune-telling and reveal to people the source of divine wisdom.

"The **Practical-Cultic** Component" section (7.2.2.) describes Etruscan shrines, from nature sacrificial sites to stone temples (chart 119) constructed after Greek models. The best-known Etruscan-type temple was erected around 509 BC on the Roman Capitol. Its dimensions (including the podium) were 62.25 x 53.30 m and the temple was dedicated to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, i.e. to the Roman versions of the three most powerful Etruscan deities. Other examples mentioned comprise altars, monumental statues of gods (often Greek-Etruscan) and sculptures of divine figures, as well as a broad range of metalwork (incense burners, candelabrums, pokers, torch holders, cauldrons, cists etc. and, in particular, famous Etruscan mirrors (fig. 147; chart 118). The section closes with animal sacrifices employed at divinations.

"The **Institutional-Organisation** Component" section (7.2.3.) concentrates on Etruscan priests who bore the title cepen (cipen) or eisnevc. As far as we know, the Etruscan religion did not involve any complex ceremonies. Priests organised mysterious ceremonies that possibly featured prayers, music and dancing, non-bloody (food, drinks) and bloody animal sacrifices, the objective of which was to learn about gods' will and secure the forgiving of misdemeanours. Human sacrifices cannot be ruled out, either. The will of gods was mediated by seers – haruspiks (netśvis). One of their attributes was lituus, a crooked staff. Seers wielded considerable power and were also advisors to kings. The **Etruscan calendar** probably resembled the Roman calendar from the period before Caesar's reform in 46 BC. It possibly was a lunar calendar with 12 months (the Roman new year started in March); the days remaining to balance the length of an actual solar year were probably randomly inserted in the calendar by priests.

The passage on **burial rite** (7.2.4.) describes intricate Etruscan conceptions of the life after death and lists famous Etruscan tombs with steles.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for subchapter 7.2.

7.3. THE RELIGION OF THE OLD SCYTHS

The chapter starts with an outline of the history of the Scythians, Indo-Iranian nomads, on the basis of written records (especially Herodotus) and archaeological sources.

"The **Theoretical-Dogmatic** Component" section (7.3.1.) characterise their generally primitive polytheistic religion with strong dynamistic traditions (they worshipped the earth, the sun, water and the blowing wind), traditions of the cults of ancestors, fertility and fecundity, and with marked animistic, and perhaps even totemistic, residues. During their stay in the Black Sea area, their religion was significantly shaped by the Greek pantheon. Some of the Scythian gods and heroes were directly adopted from the Greeks; for example, the Scythian chief Targit (Targitaj) is an obvious variation on the Greek Heracles. Similarly, the god Thamima-Sades or Thamimasadas is referred to as the "Scythian Poseidon". The Greek influence is also reflected in Scythian genealogic legends. The Scythian pantheon was not stable and does not show any hierarchy. It was headed by the goddess **Tabiti** (correlating to the Greek Histia). The god of the sky **Papaios** could be compared to the Greek Zeus; his wife was **Api**, the goddess of the earth. The god of war was **Ares**; his symbol, the **akinak** dagger (charts 123:12-14), also played a part of an important war fetish; it was worshipped and sworn upon as if it was the god himself. The chapter goes on to list further gods and heroes.

The Scythians did not make statues or idols of their deities. The only exceptions were **stone anthropomorphic steles** called **"babas"** (chart 125:3–14) that almost certainly had some cultic importance.

"The **Practical-Cultic** Component" section (7.3.2.) quotes Herodotus's observation that the Scyths did not know temples and altars, and were comfortable with open spaces and the wind blowing over vast steppes. They performed their religious ceremonies on very simple nature sites. The ceremonies had a shamanic character and were frequently associated with bloody sacrifices, particularly to Ares the god of war. Contracts between friends and war contracts were ritualised (wine mixed with blood drunk from large goblets etc.) A Scythian ritual of burning hemp seeds is documented from history; the fumes probably induced ecstasy in the participants. Scythian archaeological finds embrace a large number of bizarre objects of an evident cultic, or at least artistic, purpose (charts 121–126). The magic element of arts and crafts is supplemented with frequent animal motifs (griffin the winged monster, stag, horse, lion, goat and others).

The Scyths did not have priests in the true sense of the word. However, there were **many "guessers" – enars**, both men and women (compare section **7.3.3.** "The **Institutional-Organisation** Component"). Divination accompanied cultic ceremonies and was held in high respect. "Enars'" prophecies influenced the decisions of "tsars". They told fortune from tree bark and bast, most often willow, linden tree and willow rods. For that matter, Herodotus also conveys risks involved in the Scythian fortune-telling.

The Scyths visualised the afterlife as a wandering through a paradisal steppe, and therefore equipped their dead with all necessities for the journey (section 7.3.4., **"Burial Rite"**). This particularly concerned the Scythian "tsars" whose kurgans (burial mounds) were frequently places of bloody ceremonies (slaughter and burial of the members of a "tsar's court" and hundreds of horses).

The text is followed by selected bibliography for subchapter 7.3.

8. THE RELIGION OF THE OLD GERMANS

Subchapter **8.1.** deals with the **dawn and the oldest history of the Germanic people**, starting from the Bronze Age and concentrating on the Roman Age (± 0–400) and the movement of the nations (± 375–568), as well as on the Viking Age (± 8th–10th century). The section includes the characteristics of the ethnic group and the genealogic legend of the origin of the Germans, derived from the god **Tuiston (Toist)**, i.e. "born from the lap of the earth", and his son Mannus (C. Tacitus).

The central subchapter of **"The Religion of the Old Germans"** (8.2.) starts with the **sources concerning their spiritual life (8.2.1.)** (G. I. Caesar, C. Tacitus and others, Adam of Bremen, Scandinavian sagas; archaeological sources).

The **theoretical-dogmatic** component (8.2.2.) of the German religion developed from nature religion through the personification of the forces of nature to their final transformation into deities. The conception of "**Yggdrasil the cosmic tree**", an enormous ash tree in the middle of the universe, is rooted in general Indo-European imagery. The basic religious concept intertwined with the belief that the world was run by gods who should be respected and whose commands should be obeyed. It was essential to observe strict moral norms, especially bravery, courage in fighting and honour. Armed raids were not considered immoral as long as they took place outside one's tribe's territory; on the other hand, it was an unjustifiable crime to harm one's guest.

The "**German Pantheon**" passage (**8.2.2.1.**) is particularly important. It lists the original deities of the Roman Age and their later Scandinavian equivalents. Conceptions of the main German deities go back deep into the Bronze Age, as is demonstrated by Scandinavian petroglyphs. The German pantheon belongs with the phobos group (fear-raising deities). Although the number of gods' names preserved cannot match, for example, the Celts, the German pantheon significantly expanded in the Viking Age. Gods dwelt in heaven (the Valhalla palace for fallen warriors), on the earth and in the underworld. The supreme triad consisted of **Wotan**/Odin, **Donar**/Thor the god of thunder and **Frey** the god of fertility. Wotan demanded bloody sacrifices including human (most often hanged in trees). His servants were known as **Valkyries**, red-haired virgin priestesses who gathered brave fallen warriors and escorted them to the Valhalla ("Hall of the Slain") where they took care of them. Donar also requested bloody sacrifices, but only animals. The chief female deity was **Freyja**/Frigg, Frey's sister, the goddess of love and marriage. Other deities comprised the god of war **Tivaz** (Tyr, Týr, Ziu/Zin), the immaculate god of spring, light, beauty and purity (and perhaps fertility) **Baldr** who was insidiously killed by the guileful god **Loki** (compare the Ragnarök, "Twilight of the Gods" myth). The cult of the goddess **Nerthus** ("Lavatio Nerthus") conveyed by C. Tacitus also flourished. The section goes on to lists further local and more recent deities. Apart from their own gods, the old Germans recognised copious numinous beings – "minor" gods, demons, giants, goblins, dragons, wild beasts (wolves), sacred (eight-legged) horses, omniscient rooks etc. They also believed in "creatures of fate", the **Norns**, similar to the Slavic spinners of fate.

Section **8.2.2.2.** gives evidence of **foreign cults** (Roman gods, Jewish faith, Oriental cults) penetrating the German religion; section **8.2.2.3.** lists proofs of **residues of the old religion preserved among northern Germans** (new gods of the Viking Age, the pagan temple in Old Uppsala etc.), illustrated by Nordic myths (Kadečková 1998).

The extensive section "The **Practical-Cultic** Component" (**8.2.3.**) discusses Old Germanic **shrines and sacrificial sites** (**8.2.3.1.**). Examples include natural sites (e.g. crossroads, heights, springs, lakes, the Brodelbrunnen hot spring in Lower Saxony etc.), cultic shafts (Greussen, Thuringia) and, in particular, **swamps, peat bogs and moors** (Nydam, Thorsberg, Borremose, Vimose, Skedemose, Ejsböl, Illerup, Tollund, Grauballe, Windeby and others) with material, animal and human sacrifice (Glob 1965). The list features the most famous finds of peat-bog mummies: "Tollund man", "Grauball man", man from Borremose, girl from Windeby, woman from Roum (charts 134–135), etc.

Circular socio-cultural areas (**8.2.3.2.**) – Scandinavian "Domarringar", "Tingstäde", and "Steinkreise", or "kręgi" and "kręgi sedziowskie" – are among major Old Germanic sacred constructions. They are frequently located on burial sites (e.g. Gronowo, Grzybnica, Odry, Świerczyna, Węsiory) as well as in desolate places. They were employed in local sacred ceremonies performed under the "protection" of dead ancestors. The large ones were used for holding assemblies, "things", and some of them might have also functioned as calendars (Grzybnica).

The section on **pagan temples** (**8.2.3.3.**) documents the temple in **Old Uppsala** described by Adam of Bremen. Nordic sagas mention another shrine, Tórsnés in Iceland. The existence of further temples is confirmed by local names such as Odense, Torhov and others, referring to the cults of Odin and Thor. The famous peat-bog sacrificial places of the Old Roman Age were in the decline in the Viking Age.

Cultic attributes (**8.2.3.4.**) comprise precious **sculptures of deities**, mainly simple wooden carvings (charts 140, 141), bronze figurines, **engravings** on "picture stones", gold bracteates and plates, **spear tips** with runic inscriptions (chart 142) as well as a large number of **small sacred artefacts** (charts 143–145).

The section closes with an explanation of the swastika cross motif, an old symbol of the sun that unjustly became the trademark of the nazi Third Reich.

The **institutional-organisation** section (**8.2.4.**) sums up in part **8.2.4.1.** that very little is known about Old German **priests**. "Sacerdotes civitatis" (C. Tacitus) undoubtedly held a high position in the social pyramid yet, unlike the Celtic druids, they did not make up a distinct stratum. The supreme priestly, legal and executive power was wielded by secular lords. Even **religious ceremonies** (**8.2.4.2.**) are difficult to reconstruct (compare the disputable scene on the Gundestrup cauldron, chart 92:2); they probably involved singing, drinking mead or wine and divination employing magic wands, sacred horses, voices and flight of birds, whirlpools in rivers and the gurgling of streams, as well as the stars and moon phases. Women occupied significant positions in divination (famous seeresses Veleda, Albruna and Walaburg).

The **cremation burial rite** (**8.3.**) testifies to the belief in a spiritual afterlife. Old Germanic burials were far from pompous (C. Tacitus); perhaps the only important rule observed was that the bodies of prominent men were cremated with the use of precious woods. The remains were placed in clay urns, or wrapped in cloths, and buried in burial pits in urn fields, or in mounds (kurgans) in northern Europe. Skeletal burials of distinguished Germans (of the Lubieszewski/Lübsowski type) date from the Old Roman Age. The inhumation of major figures might have been prompted by the Roman influence (compare the tomb in Mušov, Moravia, with the remains of up to four people – kings? – including one woman, probably representatives of a "client kingdom" under the Roman auspices; Peška – Tejral 1990; Peška – Tejral et al, 2002). Skeletal burials of princes became widespread in the 3rd century (Leuna and Hassleben, Germany; Zakrzów, Poland; Stráže near Piešťany and Ostroviany, Slovakia etc.). Gold coins or pieces were sometimes placed in the mouth of the dead ("Charon's coin"). A number of royal burials from the period of the movement of the nations have been revealed in Europe (Cezavy, near Blučina, the Žuráň mausoleum near Podolí, Moravia; Laa an der Thaya, Austria, and others). Wealthy pagan Viking chiefs were buried with their wives (ritu sati, widow sacrifice), "courtiers" and riches in spectacular boat-shaped tombs, or in genuine boats.

The chapter ends with Appendix: **Christianisation of the Germans**.

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 8.

9. PAGANISM OF THE OLD SLAVS

The opening subchapter "**The Origin and the Oldest History of the Slavs**" (9.1.) discusses the oldest history of the Slavic ethnic group from its ethno-genesis to the early Middle Ages. It comprises an outline of the geographical spread of the Slavic tribes and the periodisation of the "Fortress Age" ("Burgwallzeit").

The following extensive subchapter "**Paganism of the Old Slavs**" (9.2.) enumerates the written sources concerning the history of the Old Slavic paganism (9.2.1.) and characterises relevant archaeological sources.

"The **Theoretical-Dogmatic** Component" section (**9.2.2.**) views the Old Slavic paganism as a developing system of conceptions with old Indo-European roots and residues of nature religions, namely the cult of Mother Earth and its opposite, the sky (the Old Russian "**Mať Syra Zemlja**" – Mother Moist Earth, Lithuanian "**Sierà žẽmẽ**", Latvian "**Zemes Mate**" or "**Žemýna**"). They evolved alongside old agrarian cults, cults of heavenly bodies and ancestor cults. The anthropomorphisation and divinisation of heavenly bodies goes back to the period of the Slavic ethno-genesis. The Old Slavic pantheon started to take shape with the transition to the tribal and district organisation (before the large expansion in the 5th-6th century).

In the Old Slavic paganism, man possess the immortal soul (shadow, dove, rook, swallow, butterfly, bee etc.). The soul dwells in the chest, or heart. It can temporarily leave the body (e.g. in sleep). After death it leaves the body for good, merges with nature, or the cosmos, and enters the paradise. The dualism between the soul and the body is also reflected in the cremation of the dead. The Old Slavs believed in a symbolical (immaterial) afterlife in the netherworld to which they referred to as paradise. The paradise was the land of the blessed. We do not know much about the basis of Old Slavic beliefs in gods, conceptions concerning the meaning of the human life, moral and legal norms.

The **Old Slavic pantheon** (9.2.2.1.) consisted of an original, narrow ("upper") stratum of gods and a broader ("lower") stratum conceived after the re-settlement of the Slavic tribes. The older, smaller pantheon originally included the former supreme god **Svarog** personifying the sky or the heavenly fire (his successor was **Svarožic-Dažbog**), the thunder god **Perun**, and the god of herds and prosperity **Veles (Volos)**. Perun was one of the group of Old Indo-European thunder deities; his attribute was a "fire axe" (chart 167:1–7).

The younger deities of the "lower stratum" are particularly known from the Elbe basin and the Pomeranian region where paganism long endured. Their gods were **Svarožic-Dažbog** or **Riedigost** (Radegast), **Svantovit, Rugievit, Porevit, Porenutius, Gerovit** (Jarovit), **Triglav, Prove, Podaga,** the goddess **Siva** (Živa; east-Slavic Mokoš) and others. The eastern Slavs also worshipped other gods such as **Stribog, Chors, Simargl** (Sim and Rgl) etc.

The **Slavic demonolatry** (9.2.2.2.) was highly developed: the Old Slavs believed in the spirits of the four basic elements (earth, water, air and fire), in vegetation demons, demons of time, fate (spinners of fate) and protectors of homes, animals and fields. Incubi and vampires made up a separate category of demons. Folk traditions also comprised, for example, the conception of snake-the housekeeper and the belief in werewolves.

"The **Practical-Cultic** Component" section (9.2.3.) opens with the description of **pagan temples** (9.2.3.1.), documenting the most important constructions (Retra in the land of the Ratars, Svantovít's temple on the Cape Arkona on the Rugen island, "kontinas" in Wolin/Vineta and Sczecin, the excavated temple in Gross Raden – chart 154, Mikulčice – chart 155:1a,b). **Further shrines** and **sacrificial sites** are listed (9.2.3.2.): sacred groves, circular sacrificial sites and sites of the Peryň type – chart 156:2, sacred areas in fortified settlements (esp. Bogit in Galicia with the famous stone "Zbruč idol" – chart. 157:2a). An individual passage is dedicated to the "sun shrine" in the Pohansko settlement, Moravia (chart 158), to simple sacrificial pits and other unconventional sacrificial sites including construction (foundation) sacrifices and minor occasional ones.

The **"Cultic Attributes"** section (9.2.3.3.) centres upon wooden and stone idols of pagan deities, small figurines of "pocket gods", disputable stone busts and obvious fakes from the romanticism period, diffcult-to-date stone "babas" (charts 160–163), monumental stone sculptures from Ślęża-Sobótka, southern Poland (chart 164), stone steles with images of gods (chart 165) and a large number of metal figurines and other small artefacts of potential sacred importance (charts 166–167).

"The **Institutional-Organisation** Component" section (9.2.4.) brings information on **Old Slavic heathen priests – "Žrecs"** (9.2.4.1.). In the period of spreading Christianity, particularly Christianisation accompanied by Germanisation, the priests used their pagan religion as an ideological weapon in the struggle for the preservation of their nation's integrity. One of their duties was to record time. The **Old Slavic calendar** followed the solar year and reflected the most important moments of the solar cycle, especially solstices and equinoxes, as well as periods vital for agriculture. The section features a reproduction of an analysis of a calendar system found on a vessel of the proto-Slavic Čerňachov culture from the 2nd–4th century (fig. 177) from **Lepesovka**, the Ukraine (Rybakov 1987). The passage finishes with observations on a pre-Christian script.

Information concerning **religious ceremonies** (9.2.4.2.) is scarce. The Old Slavs worshipped trees, particularly "Perun's oak" (fig. 165). In the period of developed paganism religious ceremonies probably branched into numerous ritualised acts performed by heathen priests. These included prayers, evocations of gods, hymns, conjuration etc. Ceremonies regularly peaked in sacrifice, chiefly bloody, through which the priest achieved "oneness with gods" and was able to divine. Ceremonies were followed by feasts and merrymaking. A large number of divination techniques are known, such as a divination employing sacred white horses (fig. 178).

The subchapter on the **burial rite** (9.3.) discusses the original cremation of the dead and its gradual replacement with inhumation, for reasons not yet revealed. It is supplemented with a passage on the an **obolus** of the dead (9.3.1.) with specialist literature and a section on **vampirism** (9.3.2.), again accompanied by specialist literature.

The chapter ends with Appendix: **Christianisation of the Slavs** (with specialist literature).

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 9.

10. THE ETHNIC RELIGIONS OF PERIPHERAL PARTS OF EASTERN EUROPE

The final chapter briefly characterises the religiosity of the ethnic groups and nationalities in peripheral parts of eastern Europe: the Balts, northern and southern Finno-Ugrians.

The three subchapters are entitled "The **Religion of the Old Balts**" (**10.1.**), "The **Religion of the Northern Finno-Ugrians**" (**10.2.**) and "The **Religion of the Southern Finno-Ugrians**" (**10.3.**).

The text is followed by selected bibliography for chapter 10.

Translated by Irma Charvátová and Tony Long